

RECOLLECTIONS OF OLD HOUSES

By Mabel R. Bates

Rachel Damons is a Simmons. This house was built in 1640. Blanche Simmons Peterson, Lucy Simmons Freeman, with their parents lived there, and always had a lovely farm. My grandmother White visited relatives there and told me of a severe storm one night when the wind blew in a window in her room near the kitchen where she slept. She said she came out of that room all ends up. The Damons have kept the house as it was originally, and have a lovely farm there. Their flower beds are beautiful. I visited the Simmons as a girl and went to school with Blanche from Millbrook to Partridge Academy. I have always been friends of the family.

We stepped off Tremont St. for a moment, so let's return. Miss Louise Haviland and her brother live in another Simmons place. Charles Grueby, who owned the Duxbury Coal & Lumber, took over the house from the Simmons family. His wife was a Sampson. Their sons were George and Samuel, and they attended Partridge Academy. Mrs. Grueby loaned me her fur coat to wear one winter evening when a group of young folks went on a sleigh ride. She also gave me a little book to read when I called on her as a child. I never forgot her kindness. The Roy Morgans were tenants later when Mr. Morgan worked for Eden Soule. Later the Newitts and a Dr. Sherman owned the house, before the Havillands bought it.

Next is the Elisha Sampson place, where his children were born. One son was drowned in the nearby millpond. My father, Henry White, once owned this house, and three of his children were born here. He was married to his second wife by this time, the former Emma Randall. Their children were Edith, Florence and George Franklin White. My father sold the house to Amy Bonney; then Miss Blodgett lived with her. Miss Moore later owned it. This is probably of the 1700's, also.

Now let's visit Jackson Kent's house up on the hill, next to the Sampson house. This was my home for many years when I was a little girl before my mother died, and after I married and had three children there. This was a Weston house also. My grandmother told me about calling on the people who lived there when she was a little girl. My father owned this house when my mother was alive. I was four when she died there. My sister was two, and my brother six. Our names were Mabel, Marion and Herbert White. My father owned a blacksmith shop where Wesley Stuart now lives on St. George St. He built the shop and when he left it, he sold it to Wesley Stuart's grandfather, George Corbett. Wesley's grandfather made a nice house out of it. The Weston house on the hill was where Chester and I first lived after our marriage. My father had bought the Sampson place by this time. We had no town water, but water was piped to my father's place from a "ram" in a spring on his land. We brought our drinking water from my father's barn. Three of our children were born in this Weston house, later owned by a Mrs. Watson, then a family named Lawlor, who sold it to us.

Our children born there were C. Winthrop Bates, Viola Bates Dobson, and Harriet Bates Borgeon. Our last child Emily was born five years later when we built a house off Church St. We sold the Weston house to Louise Bomer Meehan, and now Jack Kent owns it.

"Cranberry Cottage" is next. It was built in 1680. The first family I remember living there was Lydia Swift on one side and Martha Weston on the other. After they died, several families rented the place: Harry Curtis and his wife, Sadie Turner Curtis; George Solis and family, and John and Priscilla Edwards. Dr. H. G. Bumpus Sr. bought the house from the Edwards and sold it to Mrs. Florence Martin.

Dr. Bumpus built a cottage named "Snipe," and Mrs. Martin, who came to Duxbury summers, bought Cranberry Cottage, which Dr. Bumpus had called "Killdeer." He named many of his houses for birds. I don't know who later named it Cranberry Cottage.

Robert Crocker and his wife Mary rented this house for a time. Alvin and Harriet Borgeon, and the Peter Oldhams also rented it later after Mrs. Martin settled in the Snipe. She sold this house to Mrs. Lyon,

who died, and at the moment the cottage is owned by the Michael Scoffields.

Across the street live the Russell Seavers. About 75 years ago a family by the name of Miners lived in that house and William Burgess lived in an apartment upstairs. The Burgess family moved down stairs after the Miners left. William Burgess worked at Ford's Store and drove an express wagon to take orders and deliver them. He was fond of my little sister, who was then three years old, and took her with him on his route. He never invited me. After they moved to the George Ford house, Sidney Soule moved in, but my grandma was a young girl. A Miss Eldridge and her mother lived there. When Miss Rebekah Eldridge was an old lady, she boarded at the home of Mrs. Otis Delano, mother of Mrs. Percy Walker. She was beautiful with snow white hair and brown eyes. Sidney Soule returned with his family to his boyhood home, where he and the other children were born.

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